# RACCOON AT HOME

ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES

PERSONALLY, I should never dream of interrupting a fox or other wild creature in the act of stealing a hen. For the pleasure of information to be gained by watching the animal at work, the payment of a hen or two would seem no more a loss than or two would seem no more a loss than or two would seem no more a loss than or two would seem no more a loss than or two would seem no more a loss than been stealing his chickens, and have had more sympathy for a farmer neighbor who called upon me some months ago. Something he said, had been stealing his chickens, and he wanted to know ff I wouldn't try to find out what it was. He and his sons were so tired out, every evening, that he didn't see how any of them could git up nights to watch the hen house, hear on corner of this building the recommendation of the payment of the payment of money for lecture tickets. But then, my living in nowise depends upon the successful rearing of poultry; if it did, I might have had more sympathy for a farmer neighbor who called upon me some months ago. Something he said, had been stealing his chickens, and he wanted to know ff I wouldn't try to find out what it was. He and his sons were so tired out, every evening, that he didn't see how any of them could git up nights to watch the hen house, hour to night the recommendation of the payment of money for the more sympathy for a farmer neighbor who called upon me some months ago. Something he said, had been stealing his chickens, and he was not try far from the farm yard been every fift to the first the leather was thick. It did not hang on, as many animals do, but the they was as though to prevate the was though to prevate the sate they was a stonight to prevate here had seen in my shoe. I decided to let it go and hunt the animal up later, to get an idea of its private life. So I opened the door about a foot, and it dashed out and was lost in the shodows behind the buildings almost before I could see which way it went. For, short-legged the buildings almost before I could see which way it but I never seemed to have nothin' to

sit up nights to watch the hen house, but I never seemed to have nothin' to do "but nosey around the woods, looks, and the woods, looks, and he thought the job would be just in my line. I thought so too, so I actepted the proposition, and that night I took an old army blanket and made myself comfortable under the lee of a haystack, whence I had a fair view of the farmer's hen house. Before that, however, I had all the hens removed to another building, for I knew the animal, whatever it was, would probably return to the scene of its former successes, and in case I had to capture an animal in the hen house, I did not wish to nave matters complicated by the insane acts of half a hundred squawking hens. That night,

glad that the leather was thick. It did not hang on, as many animals do, but

mouth of the hole and, swinging on to a branch which grew near, was soon at the top of another tree. There she stuck, as though she were part of the tree itself, until I got somewhat tired of her waiting to do something else, and then I thought it might be well to see if there were any more raccount in and then I thought it might be well to see if there were any more raccoons in the hollow she had left. After pounding the stump again to no effect, I climbed up to the hole and looked in. This time I saw no shining stars, but I saw a number of bright little spots, and I heard a chorus of long-drawn, tremulous pur-r-rs, which I knew from previous experience meant young raccoons. I pulled from my belt a pair of old leather gloves, which I usually carry, and which I use for a score of purposes in the woods, and after putting them on, I leaned into the hole and reached down. The domining of the gloves was an unnecessary precaution,

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STILL CLOSING OUT ALL

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Ladies' Fine Nainsook Cowns, \$1.79 nicely trimmed in lace or em-

# LAST OF THE FEMALE GAMBLERS

#### Tragic Finish of a Mississippi River Poker Game.

NE thing that sometimes seems on the river," said Caleb Mix, the veteran bartender on the Missis-

ain't nome on 'em now, 'cause there's mighty few professionals travels the river reg'lar, any more. Their day has twice, with a feller named Jackson, they knows it.

she's a heap sight meaner'n any man you'll find in a month o' Sundays, even among professional gamblers, an' I reckon that's about as good a place to look for ornery people as they is.

"For some reason or another, though, the women that played poker in them days, an' there was a good many of 'em, same as they say there is now, never used to travel the river to play. I don't call to mind but one of 'em that ever set into a game, thoughten 'twas' t she were more listaned to than him, bein' a woman an' tolable well liked among the professionals, or whether it were that she told a story straigter than him, 'twan't long fore

ever set into a game, thoughten 'twas once in a way, perhaps.
"You mought see some woman play

then, f'r you wouldn't see no rich plant-ers' sons scatterin' cotton crop money, nor the planters theirselves didn't go down the river for fun so frequent as they had, but there was people travelin' with wads, that you wouldn't count on, an' sometimes they'd play, so the gam-blers was still 'round.

an' sometimes they' play, so the gamblers was still 'round.

"Teared they'd meet in New Order and the same trip.

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"Teared they'd meet in New Order and the same trip.

"Teared they'd meet in New Order and the same trip.

"There was two o' the northerners and by bubbling passements, could carry meet the seen.

In the same trip.

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where down the river an' go up as far as Memphis.

"An' she didn't travel reg'lar, but she'd make, mebbe, half a dozen trips a year. I were on the old River Belle then an' she 'peared to like that particlar boat best of any on 'em, so I seen quite a lot of her, first an' last.

"Old Man Hopper, that was cap'n o' the River Belle then, he 'peared to be all struck of a heap, the first time he reen her playin' cards in the saloon, an' he sent a nigger to ask her to step up in his office a minute. The nigger he give his message very quiet an' respectful, an' she left the table prompt, but after about half an hour she came back and took her seat.

"Nobody' ever knowed rightly what the cap'n let drop, to me onct or twict I reekon she must ha' talked about her experience in the army. The old man had been a rebel soldier his ownself an' likely hed had a soff spot somewhere for them that fit on his side. Anyway, nobody never interfered with

"An' how she could play! She ap-peared to al'ays have a good-sized wad with her, an' they said if she was broke

there was al'ays some professional ready to stake her to set in at the same game he were playin' in.

"She was too shrewd to play steady with any one on 'em, so she never got with any one on 'em, so she never got in circulation without mind havin' no show to corral any of it. Anyhow, he hadn't looked on for more'n half an hour before he made a break to get in. He did it polite enough, too, he waited till the cards was bein' without mind the professional money in circulation without mind havin' no show to corral any of it. Anyhow, he hadn't looked on for more'n half an hour before he made a break to get in. He did it polite enough, too, he waited till the cards was bein' without mind the professional money in circulation without mind havin' no show to corral any of it. "She was too shrewd to play steady with any one on 'em, so she never got to be known as nobody's side partner, but she were on to all the wrinkles in the game f'm shuffle to show-down, an' the feller that set in with her wan't likely to lose nothin' if there was

wan't likely to lose nothin' if there was any suckers in the same.

"'pears to be that their hain't no women gamblers on the boats,
"Mebbe 'tain't surprisin' that there was any suckers in the same.

"But after all, it were one o' them temporary partnerships o' hern that led to her finish after she'd been playin' off an' on, for a matter o' four or five off an' on, for a matter o' four or five

gone by, an' they knows it.

"There ain't no more games on the boat like there was, an' there wouldn't be none allowed if they tried to start 'em, so they don't try. What poker is played is mostly pikin' games, that's played for fun just to pass away, the that come f'm Vicksburg, an' was reckoned a square man, as gamblers goes.
That is, he wa'n't never expected to go
back on a pal in a game, nor to hold
out when it come to the divvy. I reckon the way he got the name was't he
hadn't never been caught.

"Jackson was hilln' They said

"The really hottest day I remember
ever bein' through out there was just
two years ago tomorrow. I tell you,
sir, I'd like to be able to draw a veil
over the happenings of that day, but
'twould have to be an asbestos veil to
hold the heat.

well, as I said, he played with her mebbe two or three times in the course of two or three years, an' there hadn't been no trouble atween 'em that anybody knowed on, when he done her some dirt. I don't rightly know what it was any man I ever seen shuffle a deck.

"An' it wa'n't 'cause they wa'n't mean enough to be professionals. I tell you when a woman does go wrong, she's a heap sight meaner'n any man you'll find in a month o' Sundays, seekon that's about that's about the same that had panned out rich o' the money, an' she hoad got to get even, on see to it.

you when a woman does go wrong, she's a heap sight meaner'n any man you'll find in a month c' Sundays, even among professional gamblers, an' I reckon that's about as good a place to look for ornery neonly support warms.

"Peared he hogged the biggest half o' the money, an' she hadn't no way to get even, on'y she told him she'd see to it that his reputation as a square man wouldn't be worth much to him any more. He on'y the same work was a square man wouldn't be worth much to him any more.

whether it were that she told a story straigter than him, 'twan't long fore everybody was givin' him the cold

months after her an Jackson had their fallin' out, she were on the river again. This time she come up f'm New Orleans, an' there was a sport f'm there that had about as bad a name as any on 'en for crooked play an' for bein' a bad fighter, that come up on the ne trip.
'Peared they'd meet in New Or-

see no outrageous show o' crooked play, but I c'd see they played for one an-other, now an' again, as you can do

other, now an' again, as you can do in poker if you want to.

"But them northerners did a good deal the same sort o' thing oncet in awhile, so that was even up. 'Peared like Kate an' her partner was too slick to get caught that way, though, an' they didn't get nipped very bad no time, but they turned the screws on desp'rate hard three or four times on the northerners, so they was well ahead o' the game when Jackson la com aboard the boat.

"Whether he knowed Kate was bleed way, an' hearin' that he was in love with, further, but drawed hi further, but drawed hi to course, Jackson that, an' he drawed, to he fumbled, or his a somehow, he bein' in a an' Dieter', bein' on the edg way, an' hearin' that he was in love with, further, but drawed hi he was in love way and hearin' that he was in love with, further, but drawed hi he was in love with, further, but drawed hi he was in love with, further, but drawed hi he was in love way.

her playin' on the River Bel'e after that:

"An' how she could play! She ap"But this here Jackson, he wa'n't no "But thi

"Well, they all looked up, o' course, an' there was a minute's pause, like afore anybody spoke. I c'd see, for I were lookin' on, too, just then, that Kate hadn't seed him afore, an' he didn't look at her when he spoke, but them devilish eyes o' hern give a spiteful snap that you c'd alnost hear, an' Dieter seen she didn't want him in so he spoke we will see the spoke by a look of the spoke was be spoke to a were bein' through out there was just ever bein' through out there was just

didn't say nothin'.

"Jackson was bilin'. They said there'd been bad blood atween them two year afore, but there hadn't been no open quarrel since I'd knowed 'em, an' I reckon Dieter wouldn't ha' made no kick if it hadn't been for Kate, for 'twa'n't just the thing to object to anybody that wanted to play in that sort ody that wanted to play in that sort f a game. Anyway, Jackson took it or a insult, as was natural enough, an says, very nasty:

I didn't know you was so particuar who you played with, Dieter. "Dieter was ready for him, an' he eaned back an' says, with a drawl. Oh, well, Jackson, you know you have draw the line somewheres. I draw

"An' Jackson sort o' choked, an' he says, 'You'll answer to me for that.'
"An' Dieter smiles an' he says: 'Certainly. Any time and place you like. On'y you can't expect me to quit a game o' poker to fight you. You'll have to wait till the game breaks up.'

"Well, Jackson he choked again, an' he were just goin' to speak again, but he 'neared to have a second thought.

once in a way, perhaps.

"You mought see some woman play once, igaybe once in a couple o' years, but you'd never see her again. It'd on'y be for a lark maybe, 'cause she happened to be on the boat when somebody she knowed was a playin'. She wouldn't be a reg'lar.

"There was one woman, though, that come along just after the war, when what you might call the last o the Mississippl river poker was played. Things can on sometimes.

"Twa'n't like the old time, even that mad, in fact, that some on 'em heard him swear he'd get even with her, but that only made it worse for him, an' they laughed at him for talkin' about makin' war on a woman.

"You see she didn't ask no favors count o' bein' a woman, an' so fur as the play went in a poker game she didn't get none, but a'ter all, men can't forget such things, even when a woman tries to make 'em.

"Well, Jackson he choked again, an' he were just goin' to speak again, but on 'the were just goin' to speak again, but on 'the were function and in the were function and in the were function and in fact, that some on 'em heard him swear he'd get even with her, but that only made it worse for him, an' they laughed at him for talkin' about makin' war on a woman.

"You see she didn't ask no favors count o' bein' a woman, an' so fur as the play went in a poker game she didn't get none, but a'ter all, men can't forget such things, even when a woman tries to make 'em.

"Well, Jackson he choked again, an' he were funct, that some on 'em heard him swear he'd get even when just bowed. You'd ha' thought of a thing slung at him, would ha' gone away, but he 'jeared to have a second thought. So he just bowed. You'd ha' thought most any man, after gettin' that kind of a thing slung at him, would ha' gone away, but he 'jeared to have a second thought. The were just some 'year's the were just some 'year's the were any her didn't get none, but a'ter all, men can't forget such things, even when a woman tries to make 'em.

"Well, it come about, mebbe six months after her an' Jackson had their fo

I'd been watchin' Jackson, too, pretty close, thinkin' there'd be more comin' pretty soon, an' I seen that he seen it. too, but he didn't say nothin'. He on'y edged 'round a little till he was 'most near enough to see Dieter's hand, s'posing, o' course, Dieter was foot enough to hold his cards so they c'd by bubbling pavements, could carry me, what I saw at the doctor's house are sten short in soile of my pain.

further, but drawed his gun.

women gamblers on the river."-New

Asphalt Streets Melted and Made Inhabitants Take to Hills. (New York Sun.)
"Phew, but it's hot!" exclaimed the

WEATHER WAS A BIT WARM.

wasn't no show o' the players bein' anxious for another one in.

"But this here Jackson, he wa'n't no ways baghful, an' I reckon it must ha' made his mouth water to see all that money in circulation without him havin' no show to corral any of it. Anyhow, he hadn't looked on for more'n half an hour before he made a break to get in. He did it polite enough, too, for he waited till the cards was bein' shuffled an' he says:

"Would there be any objection to "Phew, but it's hot!" exclaimed the red-faced man, as he mopped the latest crop of perspiration beads off his brow. "What's 'the coolest thing y'know bartender? I want one."

Lochinvar Leary gulped down his hot toddy and stared at the fat man who had just spoken.

"Hope y'don't call this hot weather," he said, with slight shiver. "This is down-right chilly, stranger, compared with some of the weather we get out in Kansas when the mercury starts

"Would there be any objection to in Kansas when the mercury starts off on one of its periodic higher-up investigations." "Why, out in Hotarea, where I con

"But somehow or nuther I didn't sus-nect it until after both my tires had melted off on the way back. "When I reached the house, though, and found my little wire-haired fox ter-rier pup a-lyin' dead on the porch, I begun t' realize that the weather was

likely to be right close a little later in the day." "Good heavens, man!" interrupted the fat man. "Do you mean to tell me that there was enough heat before sun-

rise to kill a dog? I don't believe—"
"Well, I reckon you don't quite understand me," Lochinvar explained. "" don't mean that the heat itself actually killed this little wire-haired fox terrier pup of mine. But it made his hair crinkle up so durn tight that the poor little crittur was squeezed to death, which the broad had been been been been been to be a squeezed to death, which is almost the same thing. "But, as I was about to say, when I saw this little wire-haired fox terrier

that it was going to be somewhat warm 'S'posin' the ice's melted,' thought I, and I rushed to see.
"Well, sir, that bit of fool rashness of mine durn near cost me my eye-sight. Just as I yanked the door open

a-lyin' dead there. I began to realize

a gush of hot air rushed in, and the ice

to Dieter, o' course; an' she almost screams it, she's that crazy mad. An' Dieter, be'n' on the edge of a fight anyway, an' hearin' that f'm the woman he was in love with, didn't wait no facture the very best that can be profacture the very best that can be profacture the very best that can be produced in the beer line, and as a re "O' course, Jackson was lookin' for that, an' he drawed, too, but somehow he fumbled, or his arm got catched somehow, he bein' in a sort of a crowd, an' Dieter fired first.

"The ball struck Jackson within about an inch of his heart, an', bein' a heavy one, went plumb through his lungs, but he didn't fall just for a moment. He were just about to pull his own trigger, but he seemed to think again, an' 'stead o' shootin' at Dieter as he was goin' to, he turned on Kate.

"He's killed me, all right,' he says, 'but you'll go with me.' An' he shoots her through the head. They was both dead in a couple o' minutes.

"Since then I hain't never seen no women gamblers on the river."—New 'JACOB MORITZ. JACOB MORITZ, Telephone 17. General Manager.

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